SECRET EMPIRE™

MARVEL

#7

NICK SPENCER, ANDREA SORRENTINO, ROD REIS, JOSHUA CASSARA

ALPHA FLIGHT STATION.
BEYOND THE PLANETARY DEFENSE SHIELD.

"YOU ASKED FOR A STATUS REPORT, CAROL--WELL, HERE IT IS.

"THERE IS NOTHING GOOD HAPPENING HERE RIGHT NOW.

"AS THE SIZE AND FREQUENCY OF THE CHITAURI WAVES CONTINUE TO INCREASE, OUR TECHNICIANS ARE RUNNING OUT OF FIXES.

"THE DAMAGE TO THE STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY OF THE BASE IS JUST TOO SEVERE.

"AND WHILE THE ANALYSTS HAVE DONE A FINE JOB PINPOINTING THE LOCATION OF THE QUEEN EGGS THAT ARE ATTRACTING THE WAVES IN FIRST PLACE--

"--WE STILL HAVE NO WAY TO GET THROUGH THE PLANETARY DEFENSE SHIELD, SO IT'S NOT A TERRIBLY USEFUL PIECE OF INFORMATION.

"THE ONLY THING RESEMBLING A BRIGHT SPOT IS AMERICA'S ABILITY TO DO INTERDIMENSIONAL SUPPLY RUNS--WHICH ACTUALLY BRINGS US TO OUR NEXT SUBJECT--"

--RELOCATION POSSIBILITIES. WHILE IT'S OBVIOUS NO OTHER PLANETS IN OUR UNIVERSE ARE GOING TO DO US ANY FAVORS AT THIS POINT, SOME OF THE OTHER REALITIES AMERICA CAN ACCESS ARE MORE WELCOMING--

IT'S TRUE. YOU EVER WANNA LIVE IN A REALITY THAT'S A MUSICAL? 'CAUSE I CAN GET YOU THERE.

NO.

CAROL, ***PLEASE,*** HEAR US OUT--

NO, MONICA. YOU LISTEN TO ME. WE WERE CHARGED WITH A MISSION. PROTECT THE EARTH FROM THIS CHITAURI INVASION. DEFEND OUR LITTLE PIECE OF THE STARS.

WHAT HAPPENS IF THAT SHIELD COMES DOWN AS A WAVE IS APPROACHING? DO WE JUST TRUST ***HYDRA*** TO TAKE CARE OF IT? I WANT TO BE READY AND ON GUARD. LIKE I SWORE AN OATH TO BE.

SO YOU MAKE YOUR OWN DECISIONS, BUT I WILL ***NOT*** LEAVE MY POST--I AM CAPTAIN MARVEL OF THE ALPHA FLIGHT SPACE PROGRAM--

--AND I WILL NOT ABANDON SHIP.

=SIGH=

HELLO, AVRIL.

I GOTTA SAY, MY DAYS ARE PRETTY BUSY, WHAT WITH MY STATION FALLING TO PIECES AND MY CREW LOOKING UP THE DEFINITION OF "JUSTIFIABLE MUTINY"...

...SO THE FACT THAT I MAKE THE TIME TO COME DOWN HERE AND VISIT YOU EVERY NIGHT AND YOU DON'T EVEN SAY SO MUCH AS A WORD BACK--

--WELL, IT'S @!#$ RUDE IS WHAT IT IS.

AND IT WASN'T OUR DEAL.

"WHEN NOVA FISHED YOU OUT OF THE WRECKAGE OF THAT CHITAURI SHIP, YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO BE OUR LIFELINE--

"--OUR LAST CHANCE TO OVERCOME THIS.

"THESE PEOPLE *NEED* THAT. THEY *VOLUNTEERED* FOR THIS MISSION.

"THEY DON'T DESERVE TO DIE UP HERE IN THIS VACUUM, CUT OFF FROM EVERYTHING THEY LOVE--"

--EVEN IF I DO.

YOU SEE, I'M THE CAUSE OF ALL OF THIS, REALLY.

EVERY MINUTE WE'RE TRAPPED UP HERE...EVERY MAN, WOMAN AND CHILD WHO SUFFERS OR DIES AT HYDRA'S HAND--

--I'M RESPONSIBLE FOR THAT.

I STARTED THE WAR THAT TORE US ALL APART. THAT GAVE STEVE ROGERS THE OPENING HE NEEDED TO GAIN POWER. AND IF THAT WEREN'T ENOUGH--

--HE TRICKED ME INTO BUILDING THE VERY SAME SHIELD WE'RE ALL TRAPPED ON THE OTHER SIDE OF NOW. HE PLAYED ME PERFECTLY.

BUT THEN, I WAS AN EASY MARK. I HAVE SPENT SO LONG TRYING TO ***PROVE*** MYSELF. TRYING TO SHOW EVERYONE THAT I COULD BE THIS...PERFECT HERO. PERFECT ***PERSON.***

I ENDED UP JUST LIKE ***TONY.*** CHASING ONE CRAZY SCHEME AFTER ANOTHER, TRYING SO HARD TO PUT MY STAMP ON THE WORLD, CONSEQUENCES BE DAMNED--FORCING THINGS SO HARD ALL THEY CAN DO IS ***BREAK.***

I TRIED TO MAKE THEM LOVE ME AND ALL I DID WAS GIVE THEM A REASON TO ***HATE*** ME. AND NOW, ALL I CAN DO IS SIT UP HERE AND WAIT.

LOOK AT ALL THE DAMAGE I'VE DONE AND WAIT FOR MY CHANCE TO TRY AND MAKE THINGS RIGHT. BUT I CAN'T DO THAT WITHOUT ***YOU.***

YOU GET THAT, AGENT?! YOU'RE ***QUASAR*** NOW--YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE THE PROTECTOR OF THE UNIVERSE--

--SO PROVE IT! I NEED YOU TO GET OUT OF THIS BED AND HELP ME ***FIX*** THIS, DAMN IT! DO YOU HEAR ME?!

I ***NEED*** YOU TO WAKE UP...

SECRET EMPIRE

Steve Rogers, A.K.A. Captain America, has claimed the United States for Hydra. With most of Earth's heroes trapped in the Darkforce bubble surrounding Manhattan or stranded behind the Planetary Defense Shield, his power seems absolute.

Black Widow believes that the only way to stop Captain America is to kill him. Recently, her team of young heroes helped her liberate a mysterious old man from a Hydra prison--a man Widow claims can win them the war.

Meanwhile, Tony Stark hoped to save Captain America by reassembling the Cosmic Cube that rewrote Steve's history in the first place. But when Ant-Man tipped Hydra off to the location of the Underground's base in exchange for his daughter's life, Steve showed up with an army--and a temporarily resurrected Hulk.

Captain America routed the Underground and claimed their cube fragments, but at a terrible cost: his beloved Madame Hydra sacrificed herself to save him from the Mount's destruction. And with the members of the Underground presumed dead, there's nothing to stop Widow from going for the kill.

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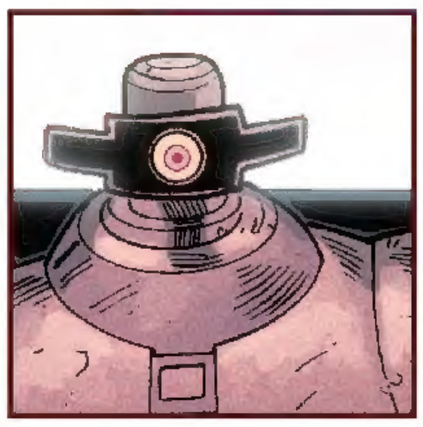
Hydra

Hydra Command

Captain America

Madame Hydra



Arnim Zola

Punisher

Captured

Sharon Carter

Beyond the Shield

Captain Marvel

Spectrum

America Chavez

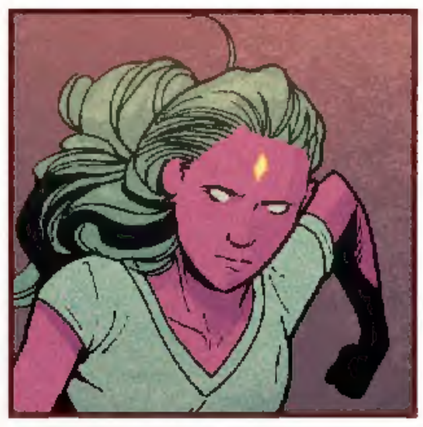
Quasar

The Red Room

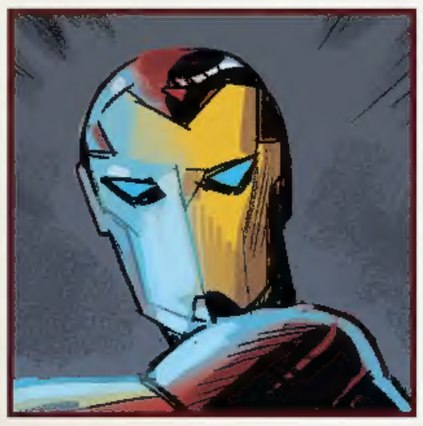
Black Widow

Wasp

Spider-Man



Viv Vision



Ironheart

Falcon

Hulk (Amadeus Cho)

The Underground

Sam Wilson

Hawkeye

Giant-Man

WE WERE IN SO MUCH PAIN.

AARGH

AAARGHH!

THE SUFFERING HAD BECOME TOO GREAT.

AAARGHH!

ALL WE WANTED WAS FOR IT TO END.

URRGHH

THIS IS MY GIFT TO YOU, HERR ROGERS. YOU WILL ESCAPE THIS PLACE--

--AND AT LAST YOU WILL KNOW PEACE.

BUT LIKE SO MANY THINGS--

--WE DON'T GET TO DECIDE HOW IT ENDS.

GOODBYE, SON.

SUPREME LEADER?

THEY-- THEY'RE READY FOR YOU.

THANK YOU, PRIVATE.

THIS IS FOR YOU, ELISA.

IN WORLD NEWS TODAY, THOUSANDS ARE EXPECTED TO ATTEND THE REBUILDING CEREMONY AT THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL--

--WHERE HYDRA SUPREME LEADER STEVE ROGERS IS EXPECTED TO GIVE A MAJOR ADDRESS, LAYING OUT HIS VISION FOR A NEW GOVERNMENT UNDER HIS LEADERSHIP.

ALREADY, HYDRA HAS PLACED NEW, TOUGHER RESTRICTIONS ON INTERNET COMMUNICATIONS AND STATESIDE MEDIA, AND IMPOSED CURFEWS IN MOST MAJOR CITIES--

--ALL THIS FOLLOWING THEIR ATTACK ON THE MOUNT, WHICH WIPED OUT THE UNDERGROUND'S LEADERSHIP AND SOLIDIFIED HYDRA'S CONTROL OVER THE COUNTRY.

THIS IS A., ON STAGE AND CHECKING IN--

OKAY, NOW THAT EVERYONE IS IN POSITION--

HUH? B., THAT'S NOT EVERYONE--

"--WHERE'S SPIDER-MAN?"

EARLIER.

YOU NERVOUS, WIDOW?

...

RIGHT-- STUPID QUESTION. WELL--*I'M* NERVOUS.

YOU SHOULDN'T BE. I TOLD YOU, I AM GOING TO HANDLE THIS--

YEAH, BUT-- WE BOTH KNOW THAT ISN'T TRUE, RIGHT? *I'M* GONNA BE THE ONE THAT DOES IT. IT'S KINDA WHAT THEY PUT UNDER MY YEARBOOK PHOTO, YOU KNOW?

"I'M THE GUY WHO'S SUPPOSED TO KILL CAPTAIN AMERICA."

KINDA HARD TO ARGUE WITH INHUMAN-TURNED-ELDER-OF-THE-UNIVERSE GUY AND HIS AMAZING PSYCHIC POWERS.

HM. THEN I SUPPOSE WE SHOULDN'T WORRY SO MUCH ABOUT THIS OPERATION, GIVEN THE OUTCOME IS DECIDED, YES? SEEING AS YOU'RE SO *EAGER*--

I DIDN'T SAY *EAGER.*

EVER SINCE EVERYBODY SAW THAT VISION--WHENEVER PEOPLE SEE ME, I CAN TELL WHAT THEY'RE THINKING. THEY'RE TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WHAT TO SAY, HOW NOT TO SHOW IT--

--BUT THE THING IS, ENOUGH PEOPLE LOOK AT YOU THAT WAY--LIKE YOU'RE A KILLER--YOU START TO THINK YOU *MUST* BE, YOU KNOW?

YES, SPIDER-MAN, I'M SOMEWHAT FAMILIAR WITH THE FEELING.

AW, GEEZ, SORRY, WIDOW-- I DIDN'T MEAN--

DAMN IT, I LEFT MY OTHER SCOPE IN THE BACK. GET IT FOR ME.

WHERE IS IT? I DON'T SEE--

HEY!

THEY BUILT THESE TRANSPORTS TO CONTAIN A HULK, SO I WOULDN'T WASTE TOO MUCH TIME TRYING TO BUST OUT. IT'S ON A TIME RELEASE, THOUGH.

WHAT ARE YOU *DOING?!*

GIVING YOU A PLACE TO SIT, CALMLY AND SAFELY, WHILE I DO WHAT HAS TO BE DONE.

NO--NO, COME ON, YOU *NEED* ME FOR THIS--

ACTUALLY, I'VE BEEN DOING THIS WITHOUT YOU FOR MANY YEARS NOW, I WOULDN'T WORRY.

WIDOW! WAIT-- *WAIT!!!*

AND FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH, WHEN I LOOK AT YOU, SPIDER-MAN--

--I DON'T SEE A KILLER.

LISTEN TO ME, CHILDREN-- I HAVE NEW ORDERS FOR YOU.

SEATED ON THE DAIS ARE FOUR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS.

THEY ARE PRISONERS OF THIS REGIME, FORCED TO PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO HYDRA ON THIS STAGE.

STEVE PLANS TO USE THOSE PLEDGES AS PROOF THE GOVERNMENT STANDS WITH HIM.

BUT YOU ARE GOING TO *RESCUE* THEM--

--ONCE THE ATTACK BEGINS.

WAIT-- NAT--WHAT ATTACK?

I TOLD ALL OF YOU BEFORE--

"--I HAVE SOMEONE WHO WILL WIN US THE WAR."

EARLIER.

I KNOW YOU'RE TRAPPED IN THERE. IN THE BODY OF A MAN WHOSE MIND IS RAPIDLY DEGRADING--

--WHICH NO DOUBT HAS YOU FEELING LOST AND DISORIENTED. IT'S QUITE THE CELL THEY BUILT FOR YOU, ONE OF THEIR MOST DANGEROUS INHUMAN PRISONERS--

"--BUT NOW YOU NEED TO WAKE UP.

"YOUR PEOPLE ARE DEPENDING ON YOU."

HYDRA HAS TARGETED THEM--HUNTED THEM--*PERSECUTED* THEM. THEY HAVE TORN *FAMILIES* APART AND DESECRATED PLACES OF WORSHIP.

BUT I AM GOING TO GIVE YOU THE OPPORTUNITY TO STRIKE BACK. FOR ALL OF THEM.

I JUST NEED YOU TO TAKE MY HAND. FREE YOURSELF--

--MOSAIC.

MOSAIC WILL USE HIS POWERS OF POSSESSION TO TAKE OVER HYDRA'S ARMY.

HE WILL GET THEM TO TURN THEIR WEAPONS ONE ANOTHER--

--AND YOU WILL USE THE CHAOS TO YOUR ADVANTAGE...

...WHILE I BUSY MYSELF WITH *OTHER* MATTERS.

ALL CAPITOL GUARDS HAVE BEEN CALLED TO THE ATTACK, WIDOW. YOU'RE CLEAR.

THANK YOU, VIPER. IT'S BEEN A PLEASURE DOING BUSINESS WITH YOU.

NOW IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, I HAVE TO--

BLAM BLAM BLAM

I WANT YOU TO KNOW--I DON'T ENJOY THIS. BUT I HAVE MY ORDERS.

FRANK CASTLE-- I WAS WONDERING WHO WAS DOING SUCH A DECENT JOB TRACKING ME.

YOU DIDN'T MAKE IT EASY.

I NEVER DO.

SO, WHAT DID HE PROMISE YOU?

A SAFER WORLD.

AN ARMY TO WAGE THE SAME WAR I'VE BEEN FIGHTING MY WHOLE DAMN LIFE.

A WAY TO FINALLY *WIN* IT.

COME ON, MILES-- HOW DO YOU GET OUT OF HERE?

PRISON TRANSPORT, RIGHT? HOW DO PRISONERS GET LOOSE?

THEY START A *FIRE.*

WARNING. WARNING. SMOKE DETECTED.

WOO-HOO! NICE JOB, VENOM BLAST...

EMERGENCY EVACUATION RECOMMENDED.

YEAH, GOOD IDEA--OPEN THE DOOR.

DOOR ACCESS REQUEST RECEIVED-- VOICE PASSCODE REQUIRED.

UHH... GREAT-- THINK, MAN-- GONNA NEED ONE SERIOUSLY LUCKY GUESS NOW...

...OR DO I? AFTER ALL-- I HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE, DON'T I? I *HAVE* TO BE THERE AT THE CAPITOL, ACCORDING TO THE VISION--

--WHICH MEANS I *DID* GUESS IT RIGHT. WHICH MEANS ANY GUESS I MAKE...HEY, COMPUTER--

BLAM

COME ON OUT, WIDOW. AIN'T NO POINT HIDING. I KNOW YOU ALL THINK I'M SOME KIND OF TRAITOR--BUT WE WERE NEVER ON THE SAME SIDE.

HE'S RIGHT ABOUT YOU ALL. YOU WERE TOO WEAK. TOO AFRAID TO DO WHAT HAD TO BE DONE. HYDRA WILL, THOUGH. I'VE SEEN IT.

SO HAVE I.

AMARGH

YOU'RE MAKIN' A MISTAKE... YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND--HE TOLD ME HIS SECRET...

...ALL THOSE PEOPLE WHO DIED--HE'S GONNA USE THE CUBE. FIX EVERYTHING. MAKE THE WORLD WHAT IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE--THEN HE'S GONNA BRING THEM ALL *BACK.*

BRING BACK EVERYONE WE LOST.

NEVER PEGGED YOU FOR A CLOSET IDEALIST, FRANK. YOU OF ALL PEOPLE SHOULD KNOW--WE CAN NEVER BRING BACK WHAT WE'VE LOST.

WE CAN ONLY TAKE MORE AWAY.

BOZHE MOI...

SPIDER-MAN!

YOU.

YOU DON'T LOOK SURPRISED TO SEE ME.

HOW COULD I BE?

WE BOTH KNOW HOW THIS ***ENDS***. GO ON THEN, SON--

--LET'S SEE WHAT YOU'RE MADE OF.

CRACK!

NOOOO!!

UNFFF!

IS THIS WHAT YOU WANTED?! HUH?!

I KNOW WHERE I'M SUPPOSED TO BE--

--I KNOW WHAT I'M SUPPOSED TO DO--

--AND NOW I KNOW *WHY.*

SPIDER-MAN! DON'T DO IT!

NADIA?

YOU CAN'T DO THIS. IF NOT FOR YOURSELF--

THEN FOR *HER.*

EVERYTHING SHE DID TODAY WAS TO KEEP YOU FROM THIS. TO KEEP YOU FROM BECOMING LIKE *HER*--

--OR LIKE *ME.*

WE WERE BOTH FORCED INTO THIS LIFE, TAKEN AS LITTLE GIRLS AND TRAINED TO BE KILLERS.

BUT THAT IS *NOT* YOU. NO MATTER WHAT YOU THINK--

--YOU HAVE A *CHOICE.*

THE DECISION YOU MAKE WILL DETERMINE WHO YOU ARE FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE.

WHO WILL YOU BE, SPIDER-MAN? WHO DID *SHE* WANT YOU TO BE?

I'M NOT A KILLER.

HALT IN THE NAME OF HYDRA--YOU ARE UNDER ARREST!

SUPREME LEADER, SIR! COME WITH US--

SHARON...GET ME SHARON...

WAIT IN HERE, SIR! WE NEED TO MAKE SURE THE AREA IS SECURE!

IT WASN'T SUPPOSED TO BE THIS WAY.

EVERYTHING IS JUST... STARTING TO GO ***WRONG***, AND I DON'T--I DON'T KNOW HOW TO ***STOP*** IT. IT'S LIKE EVERY CHOICE I MAKE SPINS IT A LITTLE MORE OUT OF CONTROL.

I ***KNEW*** THIS WOULDN'T BE EASY. AND I WAS... ***PREPARED*** TO SACRIFICE. TO DO WHAT WAS ***NECESSARY.*** BUT NOW--

--NOW I CAN'T STOP. ELISA...

...AND NOT JUST HER. BUCKY...RICK... JACK FLAG-- NOW ***NATASHA?***

I WANTED TO ***SAVE*** THEM. I WANTED US TO BUILD A BETTER WORLD, TOGETHER. NOW I-- NOW I'VE NEVER FELT SO ***ALONE.***

I NEED YOU, SHARON. MORE THAN EVER. YOU'RE ALL I HAVE LEFT. I KNOW IT'S BEEN HARD, BUT PLEASE-- IF YOU EVER CARED FOR ME--

HNN...

WAIT-- ARE YOU HURT? LET ME TAKE A LOOK--

GUARDS!

SIR?

SHOW COMMANDER CARTER HERE TO A CELL.

RIGHT AWAY, SIR--

AND ALERT THE HIGH COUNCIL. I'LL BE GIVING ANOTHER SPEECH. AN ADDRESS TO THE NATION--

--TOMORROW WE DECLARE ***WAR.***

SO THERE WE WERE-- READY FOR THE DARKNESS.

READY TO LET IT TAKE US. BUT THEN, SOMEHOW--

--WE SAW IT.

THE LIGHT.

THE THING WE NEEDED TO STAND UP ONE MORE TIME.

HOPE.

CRASH!

ROGERS--!!

RAAA--

RAAAAR!!!

NO--YOU IDIOT--

SPLASH

IT WAS THE GLIMMER THAT KEPT US ALIVE--

EVEN IF IT FELT SO FAR AWAY.

ARIZONA.
THE PAINTED DESERT.

NAAAATT!!

WE WERE SO LOST-- SINKING SO FAST, WE COULD NEVER COME BACK FROM IT ALONE.

WE NEEDED A HAND TO LIFT US BACK UP...

SOMEONE WHO COULD MAKE US BELIEVE AGAIN.

SOMEONE WHO COULD LEAD US OUT OF THE DESERT.

THIS IS IT, ISN'T IT? IT'S OVER.

NO--

WE NEEDED CAPTAIN AMERICA.

NOT YET.

TO BE CONTINUED!

Secret Empire

July

X-Men Gold #7 & #8

The X-Mansion was one of the few safe places in the Darkforce --until they let X-Cutioner in!

X-Men Blue #7 & #8

Emma Frost is back and badder than ever.

Champions #10

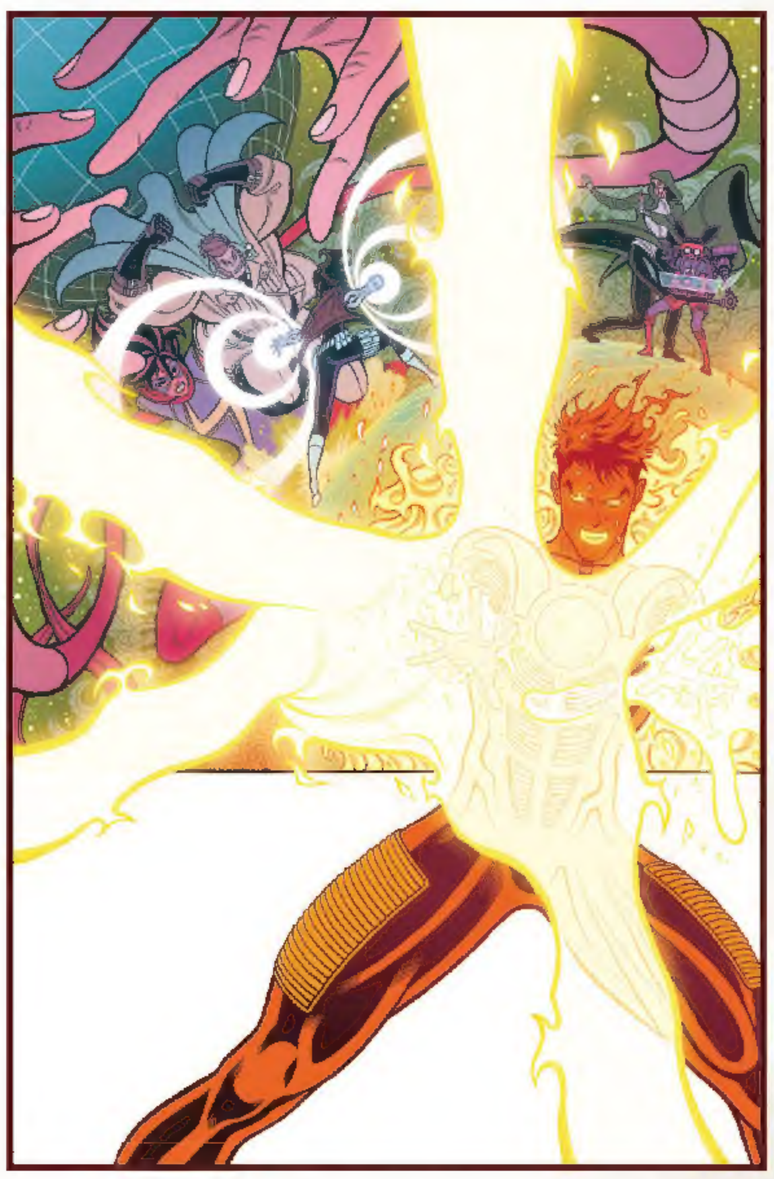
The Champions storm an Inhuman holding camp searching for their missing teammate.

Beyond the Shield

The Mighty Captain Marvel #7

Can Captain Marvel's forces hold out against the Chitauri?

Secret Warriors #4



Quake struggles to keep her team together long enough to confront Mister Hyde!

Deadpool #33 & #34

Deadpool threw in with Hydra --what does that mean for his relationship with his daughter?

Secret Empire

July

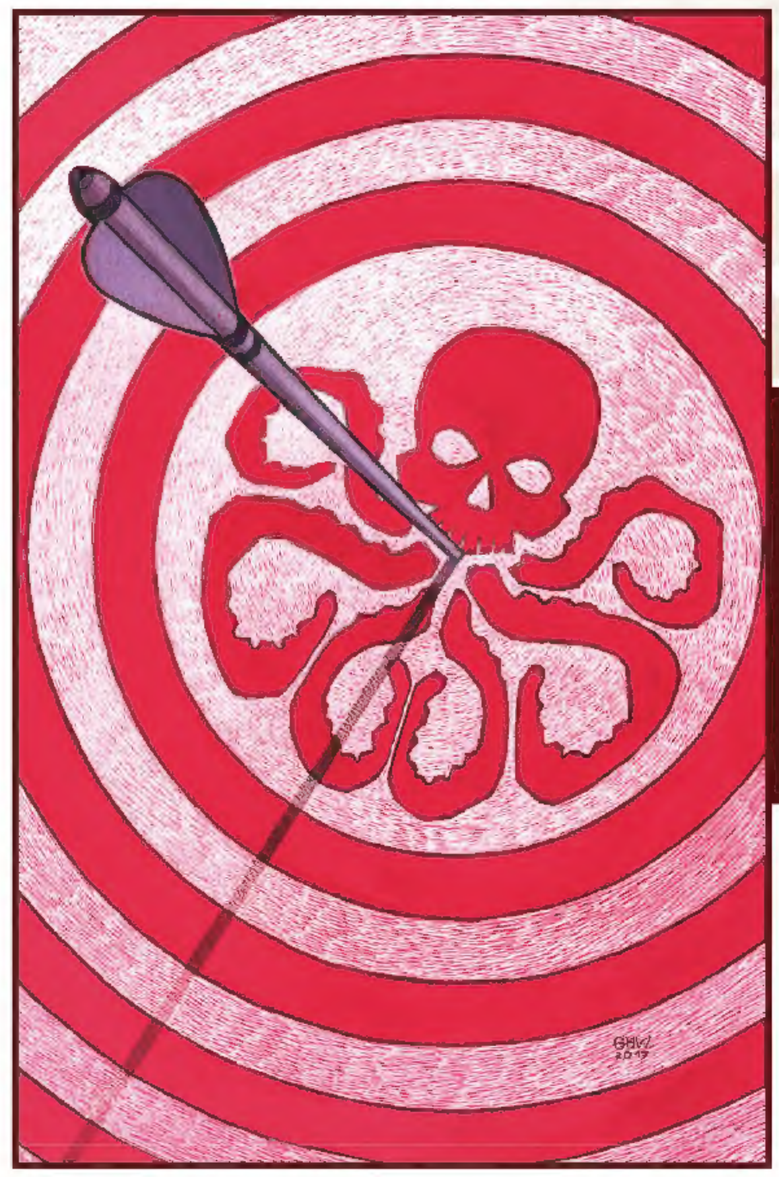
Avengers #9

What happened to Thor after Captain America stole her hammer?

U.S.Avengers #8

Toni Ho's father died saving Tony Stark's life--will Toni do the same for a dying Roberto Da Costa?

Occupy Avengers #9



Hawkeye's team makes a final stand to protect a group of farmers from Hydra.

Darkforce New York

Doctor Strange #23

Doctor Strange and Wilson Fisk team up to take down Baron Mordo!

Uncanny Avengers #25

The Unity Squad faces darkness without and within as the Darkforce assaults New York!

Amazing Spider-Man #30

Otto Octavius is back--and he's working with Hydra!

SECRET EMPIRE

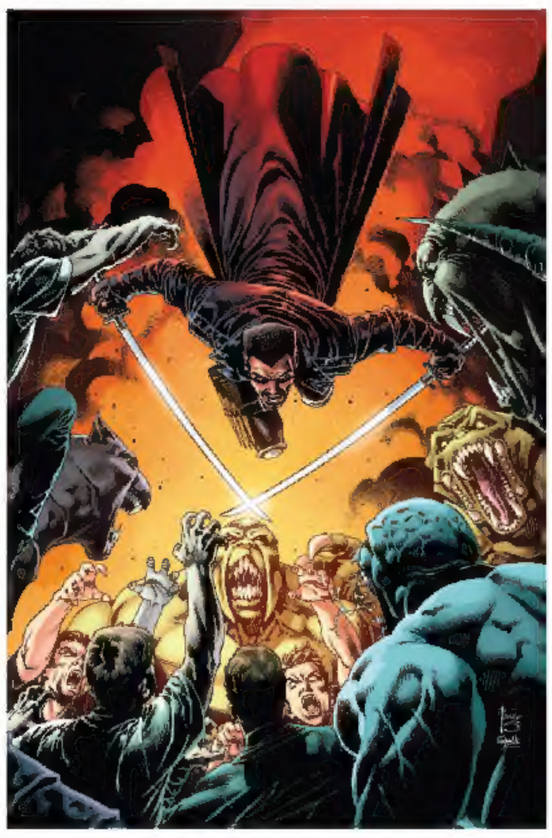
NEXT

TO FORM AN ARMY BIG ENOUGH TO TAKE DOWN CAPTAIN AMERICA, THE UNDERGROUND HAS TO TACKLE THEIR BIGGEST OBSTACLES: THE DARKFORCE DIMENSION AND THE PLANETARY DEFENSE SHIELD.

CAPTAIN AMERICA #25

TWO HEROES. ONE MANTLE. NO QUARTER.

SECRET EMPIRE: BRAVE NEW WORLD #5



BLADE, DOMINO AND THE INVADERS TAKE ON HYDRA!

ZONE